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AUTHOR McIntosh, Peggy
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ABSTRACT

This conference address, which originally concerned "gender issues in the schools," was modified at the last minute to contain arguments that counter and criticize a federal program for education put forth by President Ronald Reagan in a speech delivered earlier at the same conference, and the text of which is included here. The key themes within the President's five-point program were choice, teachers, curriculum, setting, and parents. This countering address argued that President Reagan's program was an attempt to use education to perpetuate the existing status quo and continue the marginalization of women, blacks, and other groups traditionally lacking in power. The countering address also presented a theoretical framework in which to see gender issues in education. The framework centered on the idea that society and the human psyche have been artificially divided into competitive and collaborative functions, and that these functions have caused gender roles and public institutions to become deeply flawed. A theory for revisualizing the history curriculum, and the study of women within it, is outlined and discussed. (DB)

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# COUNTERING THE REACTIONARY FEDERAL PROGRAM FOR EDUCATION

Peggy McIntosh

An address at the 1985 conference of
National Association of Independent Schools
Washington, D.C.
February 28, 1985

together with the text of President
Ronald Reagan's address given the same day

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## Countering the Reactionary Federal Program for Education

On February 28, 1985 President Ronald Reagan on short notice replaced Senator Packwood of Oregon as the opening keynote speaker for the 1985 Conference of the National Association of Independent Schools. The President introduced his newly-appointed Secretary of Education, William Bennett, and outlined their new five-point program for education. The key themes within Bennett's five-point program are: Choice, Teachers, Curriculum, Setting, and Parents.

President Reagan's talk was given at 11:00 a.m. and released by the White House to the press at 11:30. My own keynote talk was scheduled for three hours later in the same ballroom at the same podium. My topic was "Gender Issues in the Schools: An Attempt To Make Sense of It All." Because of disturbing and ominous notes in President Reagan's presentation, and because of the distressingly warm welcome which his talk received from participants at the NAIS conference, together with an impulsive endorsement from a senior member of the NAIS Board, I returned to my hotel room and rewrote my talk so as to try to counter some of the arguments and point out some of the implications of Reagan's talk. I objected to his cooptation of the meaning of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and his announced plan to get the curriculum out of the hands of those who allegedly want it to be "decided by narrow interest groups." I retained some sections of my original talk on Gender Issues in the School.

Included here are the texts of President Reagan's address given in the morning and mine, given several hours later. A generous introduction by Louis Knight, chief program organizer for the NAIS conference, came before my talk but has been left out here in the interest of focusing on aspects of the federal program and ideology and my comments on both.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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FOR RELEASE AT 11:30 A.M. EST
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1985

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Washington Hilton Hotel
Washington, D.C.

February 28, 1985

I'm delighted to have this opportunity to speak to your National Association of Independent Schools. America has a long heritage of educational diversity -- of public schools working alongside our independent schools -- and this tradition has done much to contribute to our Nation's greatness. You and the schools you represent have helped keep our educational standards high. You've earned the deep respect and appreciation of the American people, and I thank you.

Let me just say how proud I am to appear here with our new Secretary of Education, Bill Bennett. Whether as a student in his undergraduate days, or studying for his doctorate, or later as a teacher, author, or Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Bill Bennett has spent a lifetime taking serious ideas seriously.

When our Administration began its first term in 1981, we had to clean up the mess we had inherited. Today we are creating a new Nation: Our economy is growing, our spirit is renewed, our country is stronger, and America is at peace. As Prime Minister Thatcher told the Congress this month, it was not Soviet goodwill that brought the Soviets back to the bargaining table, it was American strength.

So it is that, as we begin this second term, I believe we face an historic challenge. We have the chance to prepare America, not just for the next 4 years, or the next decade, but for the twenty-first century.

Together, we can keep America moving toward that first shining vision -- a land of golden opportunity, where achievement is limited only by how big we dream, how hard we work, and how well we learn. And we know the path to that vision is through economic growth and new technologies, and renewed excellence in American education.

Today, we are making history with the most sustained, far-reaching economic expansion since the end of World War II. More than 7 million jobs have been created over the last 2 years, and more Americans are now working than ever before in our history. And we are determined to go on creating more jobs, until every American can share in the self-esteem that comes from the honest work of hands and mind.

A stronger economy is leading us into a technological revolution, offering dazzling progress for the future. During the past couple of weeks, it so happens, I've presented the first National Technology Awards, awarded the National Medals of Science, and had lunch with a group of futurists. I've heard about the fiber composites and ceramics taking the place of costly metals in manufacturing; about new medical techniques like the use of lasers and sound waves; and I've learned more about the miracles of microchips; about the practical benefits of the space station we plan to have in orbit by the mid-1990's; and the home computers that are putting art, literature, and vast sums of information at families' fingertips.

Albert Einstein once said science is nothing but everyday thinking carefully applied. Yet even laymen like us can see that in coming decades, technology promises to make life in America longer, healthier, and fuller.

Yet, as important as technology and economic growth are to our future, education is more important still. Without education, economic growth and technological innovation will be limited. Without education, we could even lose our most fundamental values -- our beliefs in a just and loving God, in freedom, in hard work. Yet if we do educate our children well, grounding them in our values, sharpening their minds, teaching them greatness of spirit, then the coming decades will be the best that America has ever seen.

Secretary Bennett has said, "Education is the architecture of the soul." With the very soul of our Nation at stake, let us consider the future of education in America.

This spring we mark the second anniversary of a Department of Education report entitled, "A Nation At Risk." That report concluded, "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war."

From 1963 to 1980, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores showed a virtually unbroken decline. Science achievement scores showed a similar drop. Most shocking, the report stated that more than one-tenth of our 17-year-olds could be considered functionally illiterate.

And so Americans decided to put an end to educational decline. Across the land, parents, teachers, school officials, and State and local officeholders began to improve the fundamentals of American education. I don't mean they went to work on budget-busting proposals or new frills in the curriculum. They went to work on teaching and learning.

When we took office, only a handful of States had task forces on education. Today, they all do. Since 1981, 43 States have raised their graduation requirements. Five more have higher requirements under consideration.

Perhaps the most telling figure is this: Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have stopped declining and have risen in two of the last three years -- the best record in the last 20 years -- and we've only begun.

States and localities, which quite properly bear the main responsibility for our schools, have taken an active part in this movement for educational reform. But we have made certain that the Federal Government has also played a leading role. Our Administration has replaced 28 narrow educational programs with one block grant, to give State and local officials greater leeway in spending Federal aid. We have rolled back regulations that were hampering educators with needless paperwork. We have taken steps to promote discipline in our schools, including the establishment of the National School Safety Center. And we have launched Partnerships in Education -- a program in which businesses, labor unions, and other groups of working people are pitching in to help schools in their communities. Today, there are more than 40,000 such partnerships in operation. In Philadelphia, for example, business leaders have raised $26 million to support the Catholic schools that educate one-third of the city's children.

I should add that one of the most effective Federal actions has been the growth of the economy I mentioned a moment ago. Private contributions to schools, especially colleges and universities, are up. Indeed, in 1983, the colleges and universities that responded to a survey conducted by the Council for Financial Aid to Education reported endowments totalling some $29.6 billion -- the largest one-year figure since the Council began conducting its surveys in 1966.

Under the previous administration, even though Federal education budgets soared, overall spending on education throughout America, adjusted for inflation, actually declined by $17 billion, dragged down by the weakening economy. But with inflation down and the economy now growing again, education spending throughout the country -- despite restraint at the Federal level -- has actually gone up by almost $18 billion. Today, many States are running a surplus and are in a better position to help fund our public schools and universities.

From the State university that has new funds for research, to the community that can afford a new school bus, economic growth is giving education throughout America a powerful lift.

Continuing this economic growth will prove invaluable during the four years to come. That's why we intend to provide more incentives, cut personal income tax rates further, and keep America the investment capital of the world. And that's why we can and we must bring Federal spending under control.

Now, in recent weeks, there has been a certain amount of confusion regarding our budget proposals on education. Let me take this opportunity to make matters clear.

In our proposal, we have recommended reserving aid for the needy, limiting aid per student to a level we can afford, closing loopholes that lead to abuse and error, and cutting excessive subsidies to banks and others. Regarding student loans, as things stand now, our Nation provides some aid to college students from the highest-income families -- some to students who come from families with incomes higher than $100,000. This defies common sense, insults simple justice, and must stop. Government has no right to force the least affluent to subsidize the sons and daughters of the wealthy. Under our proposal, this will change.

Those whose family incomes are too high to qualify for guaranteed loans with heavy interest subsidies will still have access to guaranteed, but unsubsidized, loans of up to $4,000. And every qualified student who wants to go to college will still be able to do so. Yes, our proposal may cause some families to make difficult adjustments. But by bringing the budget under control, we will avoid the far more painful adjustment of living in a wrecked economy -- and that is what we are absolutely determined to do.

Our budget proposal is reasonable, prudent, and just. I consider it fully deserving of the support for it that I am asking you -- and all Americans -- to give.

State task forces on education, college entrance scores edging back up, a growing economy providing schools with more resources -- yes, education in America has taken its first steps on the long, hard road to excellence. As we continue our journey during the next four years and beyond, Secretary Bennett and I believe there are five aspects of education to which we must give our full attention -- five guideposts, if you will, to lead us on our way: choice, teachers, curriculum, setting, and parents.

First, choice. Parents should have greater freedom to send their children to the schools they desire, and to do so without interference by local, State, or Federal levels of government. Diversity and competition among schools should be encouraged, not discouraged. At the State level, efforts to encourage parental choice might involve both legislation to permit parents to choose from any public schools within their States, and efforts to eliminate red tape surrounding within-district transfers.

At the Federal level, our Administration has made two proposals to expand parental choice. Tuition tax credits would provide some support to middle- and lower-income parents with children in independent schools. This would be only fair, since these parents are also paying their full share of taxes to support our public schools.

Education vouchers would deliver Federal aid for economically-disadvantaged children not to schools, but directly to parents. Under our plan, each year selected parents would receive one voucher, worth several hundred dollars, per child. These parents would then be free to use their vouchers at any schools they chose.

Tuition tax credits and education vouchers would foster greater diversity and, hence, higher standards throughout our system of education. These proposals have the support of the American people. Make no mistake. Secretary Bennett and I intend to see them through to their enactment.

Our second guidepost, teachers. Studies indicate that, by the end of this decade, America will need more than one million new teachers -- and that, by 1990, almost two-thirds of our teachers will have been hired since 1980.

Today, America boasts thousands of fine teachers, but in too many cases, teaching has become a resting-place for the unmotivated and unqualified. This we can no longer allow. We must give our teachers greater honor and respect. We must sweep away laws and regulations, such as unduly restrictive certification requirements, that prevent good people from entering this profession. And we must pay and promote our teachers according to merit. Hard-earned tax dollars have no business rewarding mediocrity. They must be used to encourage excellence.

Third, curriculum -- deciding what we want our children to learn. This is, to be sure, a difficult question, but this much we already know: We cannot allow our curricula to be decided by narrow interest groups. They must be determined by the intellectual, moral, and civic needs of our students themselves.

We also know certain basic subjects must not be neglected. Too many students today are allowed to abandon vocational and college prep courses for courses of doubtful value that prepare them for neither work nor higher education. Compared to other industrialized countries, moreover, we have fallen behind in the sciences and math. In Japan, advanced course work in mathematics and science starts in elementary school. So Japan, with a population only about half the size of ours, graduates about as many engineers as we do. In the Soviet Union, students learn the basic concepts of algebra and geometry in elementary school. Compared to the United States, the Soviet Union graduates from college more than three times as many specialists in engineering. It's time to put an end to this learning gap by insisting that all American students become fully conversant with science and math, as well as history, reading, and writing.

Students should not only learn basic subjects, but basic values. We must teach the importance of justice, equality, religion, liberty, and standards of right and wrong. And we must give them a picture of America that is balanced and full, containing our virtues along with our faults. New York University dean, Dr. Herbert London, learned this the hard way. One day his 13-year-old daughter came home from school, with tears in her eyes, to say, "I don't have a future." She showed her father a paper she had been given in school. It listed horrors that it claimed awaited her generation, including air pollution so bad that everyone would have to wear a gas mask.

As a result of that incident, London wrote a book called, "Why Are They Lying to Our Children?" -- which documents the myths being taught in so many of our schools. Our children should know, London argues, that because our society decided to do something about pollution, our environment is getting better, not worse. Emissions of most conventional air pollutants, for example, have decreased significantly; while trout and other fish are returning to streams where they haven't been seen for decades.

Our children should know that, because Americans abhor discrimination, the number of black families living in our suburbs has grown more than three times the rate of white families living in suburbs, and that, between 1960 and 1982, the number of black Americans in our colleges more than quadrupled.


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By any objective measure, we live in the freest, most prosperous nation in the history of the world, and our children should know that. As Jeane Kirkpatrick once put it, ". . . we must learn to bear the truth about our society, no matter how pleasant it may be."

Our fourth guidepost is setting. In schools throughout America, learning has been crowded out by alcohol, drugs, and crime. In 1983, for example, a distinguished panel reported on one of our major urban school systems and found that, during the prior year, fully one-half of the high school teachers who responded to the survey had fallen victim to robbery, larceny, or assault on school property. Of the high school students surveyed, nearly four-tenths had likewise been victimized. The panel found, moreover, that during the prior year 17 percent of the female students, and 37 percent of the male students surveyed, had carried weapons to school. In the name of our children, this must stop.

In the courts, for too long we have concentrated on the rights of the few disruptive students, and allowed simple matters of discipline to become major legal proceedings. Supreme Court Justice Powell has criticized the, "indiscriminate reliance upon the judiciary, and the adversary process, as the means of resolving many of the most routine problems arising in the classroom." It's high time we returned common sense to this process -- and paid attention to the rights of the great majority of students who want to learn.

I am proud to say that our Justice Department participated in the recent Supreme Court case that restored the authority of school officials to conduct reasonable searches. There's no need to call in a grand jury every time a principal needs to check a student locker. Today I am directing our outstanding new Attorney General, Ed Meese, to work with Secretary Bennett in examining possible modifications of Federal law to avoid undercutting the authority of State and local school officials to maintain effective discipline.

Discipline is important, not for its own sake, but as a way of instilling a virtue that is central to life in our democracy -- self-discipline. And if it is sometimes difficult to assert rightful authority, we must ask: "Who better to correct the student's arithmetic? His math teacher? Or years later, his boss? Who better to teach the student respect for rules? His principal? Or someday, the police?"

Let us teach our sons and daughters to view academic standards, codes of civilized behavior, and knowledge itself with reverence. Let us do so, not for the sake of those standards, those codes, or that knowledge, but for the sake of those young human beings.

Our fifth and, perhaps, most important guidepost is parents. Parents care about their children's education with an intensity central authorities do not share. A widely-respected educator, Dr. Eileen Gardner, has written: "The record shows that, when control of education is placed in Federal hands, it is not controlled by 'the people,' but by small yet powerful lobbies motivated by self-interest or dogma. When centralized in this way, it is beyond the control of the parents and local communities it is designed to serve. It becomes impervious to feedback."

The answer is to restore State and local governments -- and above all, parents -- to their rightful place in the educational process. Parents know that they cannot educate their children on their own. We must recognize, in turn, that schools cannot educate students without the personal involvement of parents.

Choice, teachers, curriculum, setting, parents. If we concentrate on these five guideposts, then I know American education will enjoy a great renaissance of excellence -- and enable us to achieve new strength, freedom, and prosperity in the century to come.

This month we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the publication of an American classic. It's a book I read in school myself. My guess is that most of you read it in school, too, and that most of your children -- and their children -- will as well. Its title: "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn."

You remember the story. Huck and Jim, an escaped slave, float on a raft down the Mississippi. They seem to have an adventure every time they drift ashore, and they become entangled with townsfolk, two colorful con artists, and members of feuding clans. Huck works hard to keep Jim free, and in the end he succeeds.

In this work, Mark Twain presents the humor, openness, and purity of heart so characteristic of the American spirit. I believe the book says much about the moral aims of education -- about the qualities of heart that we seek to impart to our children.

At one point in the book, Huck talks about evenings on the raft. "We catched fish and talked, and we took a swim now and then to keep off sleepiness. It was kind of solemn, drifting down the big, still river, laying on our backs looking up at the stars, and we didn't ever feel like talking loud, and it warn't often that we laughed -- only a little kind of low chuckle . . .

"Every night we passed towns, some of them away up on black hillsides, nothing but just a shiny bed of lights . . . The fifth night we passed St. Louis, and it was like the whole world lit up. In St. Petersburg they used to say there was twenty or thirty thousand people in St. Louis, but I never believed it till I see that wonderful spread of lights at two o'clock that still night."

In the decades to come, may our schools give to our children the skills to navigate through life as gracefully as Huck navigated the Mississippi. May they teach our students the same hatred of bigotry and love of their fellow men that Huck shows on every page, and especially in his love for his big friend, Jim. And may they equip them to be as thankful for the gift of life in America in the twenty-first century, as was one Huckleberry Finn in the nineteenth.

# # #

Thanks to Louis Knight's programming, this conference is ahead of its time, and will introduce visions that we can only just begin to act on. I am glad that Louis Knight put together a conference which he wanted to attend, and one of my dreams for teaching in the future is that teachers can give the kind of courses that they themselves would want to take.

When I agreed to talk about Gender Issues in the Schools, I promised only "An Attempt To Make Sense of It All." The subject of gender issues is a tangled skein, and I agreed only to pick at some knots in the skein. I wonder sometimes whether it's worth the effort -- attempting to realign and revolutionize our attitudes and roles. But if we don't try, where will we be? There are a lot of usable threads in that now-tangled skein. There is a lot of wasted energy in the schools and in the whole culture tied up in maintaining knots. Unless we can begin to loosen some of them, much constructive human energy will continue to be defeated, constricted, unusable, dangerous.

Human cultures are in trouble, and education is one of the institutions committed to making a positive difference, whether or not it does that effectively at present. I promised to look at American independent school aims, structures, reward systems, and curricula with an eye to picking up on some of the tangled knots of invisible misogyny, ignorant good faith, systemic racism, and an idealization of "mastery" which creates and maintains the knots in the skein.

As it happens, President Reagan's talk to us as educators this morning embodies most of the problems that I wanted to talk about with reference to gender issues in the schools. And so I want to discuss parts of his talk in some detail here.

As in the case of virtually every policy document he passes on to us, Ronald Reagan gave us a disingenuous misreading of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Huckleberry Finn was an outlaw. He was an immoral person, by the standards of his society. And he knew it. He decided to be what his society would have called a sinner. "All right, then, I'll go to hell," he said to himself, when he made the decision not to turn Jim the runaway slave over to the law. Now at the nice safe distance which he is from this fictional radical, Ronald Reagan put his arm around Huckleberry Finn as a good, all-American Norman Rockwell sort of kid. "Huck," and I quote directly from the speech which President Reagan gave this morning, "Huck works hard to keep Jim free, and in the end he succeeds."

This Book Report omits two crucial factors. First, as I have said, this book is about doing something that is illegal and immoral because one's conscience overrides the civic, legal, and religious strictures of one's time. Moreover, in that defective English lesson we received, our teacher didn't say anything at all about Jim, Big Jim, except as a kind of chattel recipient of Huck's big-heartedness. An alternative reading of that book might be along these lines: "Jim works hard to teach Huck how to be his human equal.

But he doesn't ever succeed." Of course, the surrounding white society would have resisted such an evolution. Our own resists such an evolution.

This kind of defective English lesson occurs again and again in our school classes. In canonized texts and in courses about "the individual versus society," we see a weird turnabout, a recurrent pattern of accepting a dead radical as a quintessential American hero. Radicals in retrospect are safe, but living radicals are unwelcome in the schools, in our classrooms, heaven help us, and in the culture at large. And they are troublesome. To romanticize them after the fact and to deny the nub of their radicalism is to coopt them.

I want to rescue Huck and Jim from the White House before they die of discouragement there in the props closet behind the furnace room. And they will die. For bless my soul, the White House doesn't want Huck or Jim at its fireside any more than it wants Mary Daly, Barbara Jordan, Daniel Berrigan, Daniel Ellsworth, Tillie Olsen, Bishop Tutu, Florence Howe, Leroy Moore, Helen Caldicott, Adrienne Rich, or Audre Lorde. We shouldn't be deluded by this cooptation of a radical book into thinking that the powers that be in this country support the Hucks, support the radical conscience which is trying to humanize itself and the culture.

At this point, I wrote into my notes that you would be feeling I was dwelling too much on Politics and too little on Education, if you were trained, as I was, to separate the two. But they really are very close together; politics and education are intertwined. Education is political, through the choice of students, teachers, reward systems, and curriculum contents. The only question for educators is which forms of politics and ideology they will choose to strengthen, and how they will use their power to either maintain existing systems of power or change them, or both.

And so I will return to the President's talk before reverting to ideas that are more clearly on education as we were taught to think of it. The dominant messages of the talk today, for me, centered on three little catch phrases which we need to look at more closely. The three phrases "a nation at risk," "excellence," and "the need for curriculum not to represent narrow interest groups," have special meanings here. All three are ominous, in context of other writing which has recently come out of the New Right and out of the middle branch of American educational policy. The present administration is really not a friend of that education which fosters peaceful social or political change, and is not any friend to education which would spread power or praise more widely in our society. I think, in fact, that this administration wishes to use education to consolidate the power of those who already have most power.

I wish to look at the gender issues raised by each of these catch phrases in turn. "A Nation at Risk ..." You will recognize that this phrase is the title of one of the recent federal reports deploring the state of American education at the moment. We are said to be a nation at risk in that we have fallen behind in international competition. In the context of that report,



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education is seen as being for competition. That is its aim. The ideal of mastery by the educated (and by our entire culture) within a competitive framework is confused with excellence in education. A lessening of mastery in the individual or in the whole culture is seen as weakening to education, and is construed as analagous to "an act of war." We are seen to be needing mastery and competition abroad, in foreign markets, in foreign policy, and of course in the arms race and in military policy.

There is a gender issue here. Throughout all known cultures and for reasons we cannot be absolutely sure about, women have been conditioned not to be the masters, not to cultivate mastery as our major attribute of personality. The very word "mastery," of course, has a male root. What else women were doing (and this of course differs across as well as within cultures), they haven't been assigned to dominate men or male children. When you wrap up a country's destiny in the ideal of dominating or mastering, and when you wrap up education in the notion of getting control, getting on top of a body of knowledge, you are working against the conditioning of more than one half the society, one half of the students, and you are reinforcing the power of the minority white male adult group who constitute no more than one third of our population.

To girls, you are delivering messages which say whatever you are doesn't matter: we will show you our stuff and teach you to admire those who are in a group you weren't born to: and we will speak for you and protect you while we keep control: you must do all the work for us behind the scenes meanwhile. The way this kind of thinking translates out into foreign policy is that those who were taught to compete, the men, handle the fates of all of us while we are meant to support them behind the scenes. I suggest that to confuse education with competition is a particularly American problem, and has little to do with the full development of human beings which education claims to be concerned with, and with the announced aim of preparing students for citizenship.

A second catch phrase from today's talk was "excellence," which was particularly linked to higher scores on SAT's, MAT's, and Regents' exams, and also with reinstatement of a familiar curriculum known as the "back to basics" curriculum. There is a gender issue here, but as in the case of A Nation at Risk, the gender issue is buried. One doesn't pick it up in the language of excellence. But that back-to-basics curriculum focuses on white male life, exemplary white male figures, and a male sense of what has been important and what has contributed to progress in human civilization. The back-to-basics curriculum which William Bennett calls for in his report "To Reclaim a Legacy" stresses heroes in the classics, laws and wars in history, theologians in religion, well-known classical composers in music, and a few "great masters" in art. The experience of women and of most of the world's men, too, is excluded: you get an education about those whom a small Western white male elite has declared notable, and this is declared to be a comprehensive education in universal human truths. The message delivered to students in schools is, "Girls are not really in this picture, but they are encouraged to study the people who counted." This doesn't differ much from the message handed to

many male students at the same time, if they come from minority groups or poor or rural settings: "You are not in the picture, but if you really work, you may get into it."

Empowerment of Learners is the theme for this conference, and this splendidly radical topic is exciting in that it promises to start us at a different place, with the assumption that all students have potential power and need more to flourish and to be useful. At present, the curriculum which claims to "excellence" as defined by William Bennett cannot possibly empower our students unless it is taught in a negatively critical way which will point out its limitations and the narrow framework of its assumptions. Such critical teaching has its uses, but the syllabus itself needs to be expanded for a more constructive validation of all students.

Finally, in Ronald Reagan's talk we heard the warning, "We cannot allow our curricula to be decided by narrow interest groups." This is a symptom of the backlash which now affects all American institutions and social movements, not only with reference to gender, but with reference to class and race and sexual orientation as well. It is no accident that just as the curriculum began to move toward the cultural pluralism which acknowledges the actual diversity of students in our classes today, a reaction set in to eradicate the gains. The allegedly narrow interest groups who've gotten at the curriculum, and from which William Bennett now wishes to exclude them, represent the actual majority. They have developed Women's Studies, Black Studies, Hispanic Studies, Chinese Studies, Urban Studies, Ethnic Studies, and American Studies. They provide courses referred to in Reagan's talk as courses of "dubious value" that are neither vocational nor clearly college preparatory. These fields contain some of the strongest, most enabling teaching in our college or secondary curricula today. In these courses, one has the chance of getting an interdisciplinary look at life and themes and people previously unexamined in secondary school curricula, a mixture of lives and of cultures which finally begins to represent the mixture of peoples and experiences which can be found in the United States or in the world today.

Reagan and Bennett have it backwards. The school curriculum has always been in the hands of a narrow interest group. White males with public power have been, and are, the narrow interest group featured in school curriculum. Adding the perspectives of all of those who have been left out will make the curriculum for the first time not focused on the perspective of that narrow interest group.

Working to make school curricula, structures, aims, and reward systems more inclusive will take us decades. I say that the curriculum change work will take 100 years. Still, it's worth making an effort to do it, and to identify it as the effort toward inclusiveness which it is. Rather than accepting the position of having to defend diverse curricula as being in the interest of a few minorities, we need to keep pointing out that those accumulated minorities make up the vast majority. Less than one third of our population are adult white males. We are talking not about going back to basics,

but about going forward to basics for the first time.

When I was preparing this talk on gender issues in the schools, I was visited by a woman who said,

> We have plenty of gender issues in my school, and I'll give you an example of their range. First, there is the business of the expectations placed on a woman in a boarding school. If she has a family, the school wants her to be a role model, but she's also expected to carry a full load of coaching and advising, and then has no time left for her children. They want the children there as a kind of showcase so the students can see a woman can "do it all."
>
> Then there's the problem of department staffing. Men are the chairs, and men are the administrators, and we women do intensive teaching. We love the teaching, but we don't get to decide a lot of what is being decided.
>
> Then there's the overt sexism. The gym teacher says to a girl, "Get your pretty little ass down to the soccer field," thinking that he's paying a compliment to the student.
>
> And then the school is always asking us to do work that doesn't get paid, that isn't in the budget. Of course, women always do work that doesn't get paid very well, and we hate to say no, because we want to help the school to get along.
>
> Sometimes feminist women get together and try to think systematically about gender issues in the schools, but they don't have any support from students, or from other women, or from school administrators.

Now here we have a heap of knots in the tangled skein. I am going to spell out a theoretical framework within which some connections between these types of problems can be seen. Then I will return to my friend's list of problems at the end. You can judge whether or not my scheme helps to make any sense of it.

I am going to draw here on the board what is for me a picture of the personality, a picture of the psyche and of the society overlaid one upon the other. There are two parts to this picture. I see the society and the psyche artifically divided into two sets of functions which represent respectively the human competitive potential and the human collaborative potential. This picture is a diagram of double functions in any personality, and in any one of our institutions.

The part at the top is divided from the part down below by a kind of

geologic fault which divides the two functions of personality or work one from the other and put the functions at right angles. The competitive potential up above is on a vertical grain and the collaborative potential below is on a horizontal grain. The functions of the personality in the upper part are attuned to and trained for success, accomplishment, achievement, excellence, and victory. In this world, there are clear vertical ladders, and either you are going up or marking time or coming down. It is easy to measure and appraise "where you stand" on these ladders through academic grades or pay, promotion, press, praise, and prizes.

At the top of this mountain-like structure of the broken or faulted pyramid, I have written "Top" and just above the fault line here I have written "Bottom" but you notice I put quotes around them because I do not believe that these are in fact the "top" or the "bottom" functions of our competitive potential. Those designations are put on the so-called winning functions and the so-called losing functions by those who have reached the so-called top. The part of the personality which advances one competitively in success, accomplishment, achievement, and getting ahead, i.e. winning, on terms that have been set by the main society is fostered and is seen to do well both within the public institutional structures of the society and within the personality. Some public institutional structures which correspond to these pyramids of competitive potential are the military, the corporation, the institutional part of the church, the university, college, and school, the legal profession, the medical profession, the banking profession, and the government.

In all of these public institutions, you know whether you are going toward the "top" or to the "bottom" because there are so many exterior markers for you. There is great pressure to ascend the ladder toward success rather than to be static or to descend. For hanging over this public institutional part of the psyche and of the society is a hidden prescription, really a warning, which is "You win lest you lose." Those are seen as the only two alternatives. They fit right in with the kind of teaching that is bipolar, posited on right/wrong, yes/no, either/or, better/worse, win/lose thinking. The functions of mind which develop in the competitive and public institutional situations are those in which, given two things, one chooses, judges, and ranks: this is better than that; this student has mastered this thing better than the next student; our culture is better than theirs; men do better than women.

This world of exclusive alternatives, expressed in laws, sports, games, and wars, has been projected onto white males, particularly white males born to privileged positions in terms of economic, regional, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. When I say projected, I mean that it has been assumed that while men will be at home in the world of winning lest you lose, being right lest you be wrong, being one thing rather than another, choosing, making decisions, identifying goals, and getting control rather than developing other types of more diffuse sensibility. New research on men indicates they are not all so happy with the projection onto them of the values of the win/lose, right/wrong, yes/no, either/or world. It creates what Joseph Pleck, in The Myth of

Masculinity, calls sex role strain in men, to live up to projections onto them of a masculinity which is more theoretical than real.

Below the fault line in my diagram, quite beyond the world of the so-called top and bottom, the world of winning/losing, being right and wrong, and always judging better and worse, is a whole unexplored realm of the psyche which is the ground of our being. It is the world in which the chief function is not to get ahead but to get through, to stitch life together socially and psychically, and is the basis not only of the person but also of the civilization and of our intimate relationships. Some of these functions of the psyche and of the society are quite humdrum and appear never to "get us anywhere." But these functions provide all the continuity onto which the rest of life gets grafted.

The best metaphor for the dailiness of these functions, as far as I am concerned, is the metaphor of dishwashing. You wash the dishes and then you wash the dishes and then you wash the dishes and then you wash the dishes. You haven't won. But you haven't lost. You see I am drawing lateral connected lines here. This world involves interrelationships as well. You talk to the children, and you wash the dishes, and you put in a supply of pet food, and you answer the phone, leave a note for the repairman who didn't come yesterday, and you pat the cat, and you arrange the car pool, and talk to the children, and look up the bus schedule, and then you wash the dishes. You see a student, you see the same student the next day, you see the same student the next day, and after she graduates, that same student will revisit you and will talk about the same things all over again. At the end of the day spent doing these things which have lateral maintenance functions, beyond the world of winning, losing, success, accomplishment, and achievement, you will feel that you "haven't accomplished anything." You are set up for depression. Yet you have been using those functions of personality and building those functions of society which are the major constituents of personality and of society for all of us, I believe -- that sense of keeping it together, doing the routine, repetitive, cyclical things that haven't been given pay, press, praise, prizes, or public admiration. These activities are not seen as testifying to high motivation. The economists don't even call most of them "work." They have no product that gets reckoned into the G.N.P. But they are the ground of our being, and the only source of friendship, love, and relaxed interrelationship, since in the world of ladder-like competition, bonding is really not possible, except as part of a team effort in which the main aim is still winning.

Many teachers chose teaching, not because it is here at the "bottom" of the vertical scale of professions, seen as something which losers do, but because they appreciated the give-and-take in horizontal fashion which occurs between teachers and students, not with mastery in mind, but with the aim of developing together. This part of the personality has to do with what Jean Baker Miller calls "finding one's development through the development of others." A lot of counseling has to do with these lateral relationships rather than with getting somebody pushed upward in some direction or rescuing somebody from a failure. Most of life is spent holding things together at

the level of upkeep, maintenance, and making and mending the social fabric. This is good work. And it is constructive work. It is not violent.

Growing up as a girl, I was relieved to realize that I didn't have to play "Guns" as my brother had to, every afternoon in our New Jersey neighborhood, in order to show that he was not a sissy. I was relieved that I only had to be "nice." I vastly preferred my lot. Being "nice" involved friendship; involved, as Carol Gilligan has suggested, playing Neighbors instead of playing Pirates. I want to stress that the part of the psyche in all men and in all women which is social, lateral, and interrelational is a good part of the psyche, even if it is not well developed and is not praised, paid, seen, or researched. It makes possible the making and the mending of the social fabric; intellectual, psychological, moral, and spiritual fabric. It is the base for all of those more assertive upward climbs toward power which our teachers have confused with Civilization.

Unfortunately, these vital functions of upkeep, maintenance, and making and mending of the social fabric represented here by the horizontal base of this broken pyramid have been projected onto women and onto lower caste men. Those groups have been burdened by the mistaken view that they would thrive in the world of holding it all together behind scenes, while their work, and the strengths of body, soul, and mind such work requires, were not honored or rewarded.

I have said that these functions, vertical and lateral, are in all of us, male and female, and in all institutions. New research on women indicates that despite the fact that the role assignment of playing Neighbor and Servant may be in ways more pleasant than the role assignment of playing Pirate, or Boss, women aren't so all-fired happy with the projection onto them of roles of upkeep, maintenance, and holding it all together; they want more earnings, more authority, more credibility. We have a situation of differential projection of abilities onto sexes and races so that groups are made to seem opposite from one another. A more inclusive socialization would allow the sexes and races, instead of being told they are so different, to develop fully both collaborative and competitive parts of themselves.

Moreover, that is the only change which can begin to create a two-way traffic between the functions of the psyche and society which are horizontal and those which are vertical. At present, there is one way traffic, "up," by those on whom these lateral functions were projected into the world of those on whom the vertical functions were projected. But feminists question whether the so-called "top," investing a lot of power in a very small set of psychological attributes, and in a very few sectors of society, has produced in fact our best human society. A lot of power and a lot of money have been going to those who specialize in a very few kinds of psychological and institutional activity. We ask, as Virginia Woolf asked, "Where is it leading us, This procession of the sons of educated men?" And we want a two-way traffic, so that the competitive world is changed by influences from the lateral world.

The hidden ethos of prescription which hovers over the lateral part of the personality is much more healthy for all of us than the one which warns, "You win lest you lose." The hidden ethos of the lateral part is "You work for the decent survival of all, for therein lies your own best chance for survival." Such work is not altruistic. In a nuclear age, we are all endangered by win/lose, either/or, right/wrong thinking. The more collaborative functions of psyche and society allow us to be interdependent and sustaining. The Other is as valid as onesself, potentially. Instead of saying either/or, you say both/and. Not either us or the Russians, but both us and the Russians, and the Chinese and the Cubans and the Swedes and the Spaniards and the Argentinians and the Jamaicans. We can and must figure out how to exist diversely in this world without simply letting competing powers blow us up in the effort to win.

Policy makers of the so-called top need education in the sustaining and survival power of the collaborative part of the psyche and the society, so that they can get beyond the idea that either you win or you lose, and that those are the only two alternatives, in public life, in jobs, in private fortunes, and in foreign policy. Recently, more of society's maintainers have been entering ranks of society's public competers. At their best, they carry with them the values of those lateral activities and think of policy differently, trying to manage leadership in ways that have less to do with domination. They have not yet been influential in teaching those who specialize in the winning functions to take collaborative life, or friendship, as a model to bring out the best in others or to distribute power, energy, and resources better in the culture. So we badly need more two-way traffic between the competitive functions and the collaborative functions, to reeducate the competitive to be less violent and dangerous, and to give public voice to the collaborative. Most of all, we need to reeducate white men, on whom winning has been projected, to the behavior and values of surviving decently which are utterly different from the behavior and values of winning and losing.

I promised to look at school structures, aims, reward systems, and curriculum in the light of this theoretical framework. My work on curriculum change with colleges and with secondary schools over the last six years has made me conceive of interactive phases of personal and curricular re-vision fitting onto this diagram. If it interests you, I recommend also that you attend the session here given by Susan Van Dyne and Marilyn Schuster of Smith College. They were participants in the Mellon Seminar when I first presented my five-phase theory, and they have added a phase and come up with an expanded theory. They have done much work on curriculum change which will result soon in a book.

A number of other women in the country, especially Mary Kay Tetrault of Lewis and Clark College, have been working on feminist phase theories, and though the terminology varies some, and has varied over the last ten years, the general idea is that there is a gradual development of perception which comes with trying to do this work, if one has started within a traditional white United States educational framework.

The names for phases which I use in considering the discipline of history are: Phase I -- Womanless History; Phase II -- Women in History; Phase III -- Women as a Problem, Anomaly, Absence, or Victim in History; Phase IV -- Women's Lives as History (at which point understudied men also become visible): and Phase V -- History Reconstructed and Redefined to Include Us All.

A Phase I Womenless History curriculum stresses the top of the pyramid which I have drawn, and it emphasizes those functions of winning wars, making laws, demonstrating so-called genius, having or getting power, making choices, and achieving goals.

In a Phase II curriculum, Women in History, a few women are given equal opportunity to be seen as near "the top." So you put in the women who participated in the wars, or who might be called geniuses, or who have done something at the cutting edge of cultural change and have been deemed special for it, and seen as exceptions to their kind. That's the Phase II consciousness, stressing the exceptions. It puts Madame Curie into the picture but still leaves out all the others who might have done work in the lab, or who were excluded; it leaves out a study of all the effects of scientific discovery on women's actual lives; it denies that there is any science in ordinary people's seeing of or behavior in the world.

In Phase III, one begins to ask the question, "If women really have been half the world's population and have had half of the world's lived experience, why can't I get more of it into my courses? Why can I only get in Marie Curie and Susan B. Anthony? Phase III thinking makes us resee exclusion as characteristic of the disciplines as well as of society itself. In Phase III work, we learn about the exclusion of women from, for example, public performance of music, or from composition; we hear quotes such as that from Antonio Brico: "I cannot use my instrument. My instrument is symphony orchestra." We study the exclusion of large groups of people from the making of knowledge, as well as from the making of decisions, and the use of wealth and public power. We study victimization of people who were defined both as Other and as Lesser than those in the dominant groups, and we see that failure to study them in the past was part of their victimization.

But for all the usefulness of Phase III work, and the necessary anger and awareness of issues which it raises in students' minds, the work in Phase III is still not necessarily pro-woman; it can be misogynous work, unless it is carried further. Courses which focus on victimization of people, no matter how accurate they are in their way, still argue from a dominant point of view, seeing the victims as defective variants of those who have had most privileges. My own head was turned around on this many years ago when a Black friend of mine said, "I wouldn't want to be white if you paid me $5,000,000." I suddenly saw that her culture must have a strength in its own terms. Her identity was not captured by the designation of victim. Moreover, a woman at the University of Maine once said to me after a talk, "There is something you don't understand about being poor. It's just being poor. I've been poor



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all my life. My father is a fisherman. I will be poor all my life. Now what else...?" There she was, as fully a human being as I, yet I had been taught she was definitely disadvantaged in some absolute way. I had been taught there was only one real form of privilege, and everybody must want that. That's hegemony. My contributions to the civil rights movement and the antipoverty movement did not end upon these revelations. But I learned the "victim" is not just a victim; the victim has a fully human identity which may have a different base from mine.

Now Phase IV work is the most exciting, because it tips you over into asking questions we were never invited to ask. "What was it like for the women? What was it like for that Hispanic child? What was it like for the slaves on that plantation? or for Chinese building the western railroads? What has life been like for people doing ordinary things or maybe extraordinary things in many places on the earth and in many eras of the world's history? What has it been like?" At that point, you begin to flip over from the studies of racism (Phase III), to studies of Black cultures (Phase IV), and from studies of sexism to studies of women's communities and actual experiences from inside. You get centered in on those who had previously been seen as Other and Lesser, and begin to look outward from their points of view. This produces a most wonderful revolution in teaching and in learning, in personal perspectives and also in research questions.

When you start to do Phase IV work on Women's Lives As History, first of all you begin to include in all the men who were never really studied before on their own terms either. You get past Thomas Jefferson and a few other male heroes and begin to look at the actual structures of life in Virginia communities, and not always with the idea that it was better to be Jefferson than anyone else. You get a conviction about everybody's essential humanity, however wronged they were. Though I have called Phase IV Women's Lives As History, it makes visible many other understudied functions of life and aspects of history as well. One puts them in the center of a canvas and stops worrying about whether they have been defined in our graduate schools as belonging to the field.

This is radical work, producing innovative teaching, and one is at risk for tenure or promotion within a university system if one does Phase IV work. In Phase IV one develops curriculum which will be seen as "of dubious value" by the standards we have been taught. But we mustn't be surprised if Phase IV work appears to the traditionally trained mind to lower the standards. By the definitions we have been given, putting women in <u>does</u> lower the standard. But putting us in on our own terms is an exciting and enabling act for many teachers and students. It generates genuine curiosity and questions. The relationship between the teacher and student changes; the student becomes more of a resource for the class and the teacher becomes less of an authority. And the relationship of both to the subject matter shifts when you abandon the "I talk/you listen?"mode of teaching or "I teach and test, you learn." As Susan Van Dyne and Marilyn Schuster have said, one shifts from seeing the student as a vessel to working for the empowerment of students, when one

shifts from a Phase I to a Phase IV or V curriculum. Many of our students dislike the sound of "Women's Studies" in any form. They have been taught to deny victimization, and have not been trained to see invisible systems at work. Such students nevertheless respond well to teaching about women's cultures or understudied men's cultures seen from within, and on their own terms, and in ways that draw on students' own experience and speak to their interests.

Now Secretary Bennett is urging us to go back to a curriculum of false "universal values," which would be Phase I instead of IV or V. I think that is because a curriculum which would truly empower all students to think of themselves as real might be politically troublesome. But we need instead to move forward to Phase IV and even to Phase V teaching: History Reconstructed and Redefined to Include Us All. It will take us 100 years to get there, and the work in getting there will be set back continually, as the Bennett reaction suggests. But we need to see that History as we have been teaching it is a construct which we built, and can therefore rebuild to deliver a different and more inclusive version of who counts, what exists, and what human life has been like. History needs rewriting so that when we study America, we learn not only about its violence and mastery and problems, but also about the fabric of daily life, and what it was like to be here and to embody this pluralistic society from a variety of perspectives and experiences, and with a variety of different and conflicting "errands in the wilderness," as one American history teacher has put it.

Though Phase III faces honestly victimization and the issues of those who don't fit in, we need to press forward from the study of that to the study which is truly more inclusive in Phase IV. I think students will, and should, remain alienated by the schools' curricula until this happens. The curriculum which tells them only a few exist and only a few functions of personality really matter is not good for them and is not good for the society in which they will soon be the adults, but a Phase III curriculum which fills them with anger and guilt has limited usefulness, too. Teaching them to see invisible systems at work is one of its chief contributions. Giving accurate information on deprivation and oppression is another. But it does not teach that all people are human. A Phase IV curriculum is truly humanistic.

Now I want to turn to school aims, structures, and reward systems. School reward systems tend to be hierarchical, like the top part of the broken pyramid. More money and power attach to those who run a school than to those who teach. Teachers of juniors and seniors are in turn better paid than those who teach seventh grade or kindergarten. School people love to talk about "levels" of education. There are hierarchies of subject matter; math and science carry more prestige than French teaching or physical education or counseling. Those jobs which require a lot of lateral psychological work in connecting people with, for example, books and resources are devalued. The disciplines involving affect rather than what is seen as "objective knowledge" are low-rated. Disciplines which teach the most pyramidal right/wrong kinds of thinking tend to be valued highly.

We cannot simply discard the system of hierarchies in education. We have been working with it and strengthening it and refining it for years, and we didn't invent it: we inherited it. As Ted Sizer points out, United States schools are remarkably similar to what they have been since the turn of the century, and we cannot simply revise them in a hurry.

But we can at least see the degree to which schools mirror the hierarchical parts of the institutional society and the psyche and discredit the lateral work; the curriculum trains the competitive functions. Meanwhile, the business of turning out decent citizens is left to extracurricular activities or to a civics class which is not taken very seriously. Almost no classroom assignments in high school suggest girls' lives are as valid as boys', women's as valid as men's, or Blacks' as valid as whites'. Everybody is taught about heroes and male protagonists, and nobody learns much about the social fabric. We say we expect these young people we are educating to be good citizens, but men cannot value their sisters, mothers, or wives if these women have been invisible in the curriculum. Neither can the women value themselves. People of both sexes are being trained every day and in every way to think that women aren't real. And all of our students are trained to think that darker-skinned people like Arabs, or Latinos, or Malaysians are subhuman. This is what happens when you honor the old hierarchies, focus on the "tops," and let the old omissions and exclusions stand.

School aims, like school subjects, are hierarchical. Many school catalogues mention the aim of teaching skills and developing students' potential. I read this as a code language about training students, as soloists, how to get ahead, to grab one of those little pinnacles of power through "mastery," or at least to grab a place in a "good" college. I don't see anything in the language of school Admissions statements which commits a curriculum to get students beyond the challenging, critical, negative, and doubting sorts of individualistic thinking. I see nothing about an aim of helping students all together to see invisible systems at work, and to be agents of collective change, in a world which is not working well for most of us. I see little aim among schools to help students understand the importance of the circumstances which surround individual lives, or to train or encourage students to use power and money and privilege so as to share power and money and privilege. Schools at present are not good at developing the collaborative potential in people of both sexes and all races.

Most of our affirmative action programs, therfore, are sadly based on the assumption that the institution is at present very fine and the disadvantaged person is allowed to take part in the privileged life. On the contrary, affirmative action understood under Phase IV thinking improves a defective school. Those who were at the "top" of our culture are in fact themselves distorted and damaged by the ways in which they have been taught to hold and to exercise power. Their life can be improved through affirmative action; they can learn from those who have alternative and less dehumanizing experience.

In our school reward systems, grading is definitely hierarchical, as

are most promotion, praise, and ladder-like pay structures or levels within a school. The achievement of academic "excellence" by our students is construed as a competitive and solitary matter, to be rewarded by a grade to an individual. When our independent school girls hang back from the isolating experience of being called excellent (an experience which will also make them seem like exceptions to their kind), sometimes they reflect their conditioning. They have been socialized not to be isolated on a pinnacle, by acknowledging an "A" or a prize or a reward, but to remain part of a collective. Surely there should be some ways in which we could grade the collective. I have seen colleagues, teachers in schools, do wonderful experiments with collective projects receiving collective appraisal from the teacher. In addition, it is possible to work in schools on contract grading between the faculty member and the student before a course, which takes some of the pressure off and gets the process out of the win/lose situation into the "we are in this together" situation, in which faculty and student can be seen as adjunct to each other. As it is, we set the teacher up to be better and the student worse, the teacher as the authority, the student as the one to be judged, the teacher always able to do better on every test than the student who is tested. It's ludicrous, isn't it, since we know perfectly well that some of our students in fact are more talented than we, yet our present modes of setting up education to prop up the teacher's authority cancel out our abilities to keep track of and really benefit from the student who is our superior.

I want to return now to the comments of my friend who told me of the gender issues in her school. That boarding school wants women as role models--women who are mothers. It expects them, however, to carry a full load of coaching and advising. The women have no time for their children, who are showcased by the school as demonstrating to students that women can have families and jobs. What you have here is a Phase II gesture and a Phase IV reality. Women have equal opportunity on the old terms. They are allowed into boarding school structures that used to have men doing these jobs. These women are shown as exceptional in being able both to do what men do and to have families at the same time. In fact, the Phase IV realities of women's lateral responsibilities work against their being able to put in a 60-hour boarding school work week which involves coaching and advising and teaching as men used to do them. Those men were bachelors or were taken care of by a support system in the shape of a spouse or other servants. The school, however, does not want the woman to demonstrate to the rest of the school the laterality of those constant responsibilities and relationships which interrupt her at every turn. They want her to appear to the students to be "as good as the men," and they'd like the rest to remain only as a domestic image. The professions need to learn that the length of the paid work week is incompatible with giving serious time to a family. The school's week needs to be reduced for both sexes.

Another complaint was that men do the chairing and staffing and administering and women do intensive teaching. Those who hire in a Phase I consciousness simply keep giving administrative responsibilities to men. Men have always done this work: they feel familiar to the administration. Why not promote men? Some school administrators also have a Phase III consciousness, aware that women may feel problems or be anomalies in these jobs. Some



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think women don't want "responsible" jobs, or can't be trusted in them, or can't exercise leadership. In this case, leadership is usually defined as mastery, domination, or taking other people where one wishes them to go. Because women don't fit the male-oriented and very hierarchical definitions of what excellence is, they are not given the jobs which might allow them to bring their alternative perspectives into the decision making posts of the school.

The overt sexism in "Get your pretty little ass down to the soccer field" is a piece of characteristic Phase I thoughtlessness. But to a person with a Phase III consciousness it will also seem like victimization. It is sexual harrassment of the girl who is reduced to a sex object by the remark. If her consciousness is in Phase I, she will be flattered to have a man (the authority) appear to admire her shape. In Phase II, she'll be glad to be treated roughly like one of the boys. But the girl who is self-conscious about her body and aware of the problem of being made into a sex object will have bad feelings about the "compliment," and will feel victimized. Most of our students will be confused, torn between these types of responses, and unable to reply.

Another complaint of my friend was that women were contributing unpaid labor, doing a lot for the school because they didn't want to say no. The women in this case have a Phase III issue: they are being exploited. On the other hand, there is a very important need to put a Phase IV analysis on this form of exploitation. The women and lower caste men who do repetitive and cyclical work, associated with that which needn't be paid, are in fact often holding the whole institution together. The school sees them as being at the bottom of the hierarchies of competence, and sees the unpaid work as something which can simply be taken for granted. But it is not only the upkeep and the maintenance of the school: it is the very <u>backbone</u> of the school which is being supported by this unpaid, undervalued work. Not only is it important to get that work paid, but get that work identified as the <u>sine qua non</u> without which the whole institution would cease to function or to be respected. The woman on the switchboard makes all the difference. So does the Admissions secretary. So does the Committee on Health and Counselling.

My friend also said that feminist women get no support from administrators or other women at the school when they wanted to talk to one another about their issues. This is a familiar problem. Women identified with men and men's interests, that is, women who have turned out as the culture tried to get us to turn out, don't want to associate with women who are bonding with other women in any way. It is a form of homophobia: this fear of bonding between women. It is also a political position: identifying with the apparent protector, when "making it" within a dominant system, rather than identifying with those in one's actual nondominant group. I see the problem at Wellesley in students who, like students in so many of the other elite colleges, say, "My mother never did anything, but I am going to be a lawyer." The person uttering this statement has dissociated herself from her own group and its history, and become an exception to it, in her own view. She may be all right for now, but for the long term she is at psychological risk.

So the men who need power, together with the women identified with them, trying to get into Men's History on its terms, will all work against the bonding together of women who feel that they are not making it in the man's world, or don't want to, and have issues which make them angry or experiences which seem too undervalued by the school. In this case, I see that women who are more identified with what men have done than with what women have done are average, but are at high risk; the women are set up for later depression whose origin they may never know; at least the women with some Phase IV consciousness value themselves.

I see that school aims, reward systems, structures and curricula could shift off a hierarchical base once we began to see systemically past the individual. Changes in the curriculum to bring more materials on women into the courses we teach will help not only the faculty but also students to begin to see systemically. We need to level off some of the highest pinnacles which are celebrated as the heights of genius or power in our curricula, so that more sense of constructive human possibility is given to everybody. Russian, Chinese, Iowan (!), Arab, male, female, academic, urban, rural: all people have some validity, and could be seen as adjacent to one another rather than as scrambling up ladders. School structures need more rotating headships, more rotating chairmanships, much more dispersion of power among various types of teachers, and more respect particularly for the lower school and what it has to teach us about making classrooms interdisciplinary, interactional, and good at developing the lateral as well as the competitive in students.

In our schools at present, Phase I reward systems, structures, aims, and curricula are firmly in place, and these endanger both the mental health and the actual physical existence of all of us. Phase II is beginning to come into its own in a few places. Women are being allowed into provinces of power and authority or curriculum which were previously closed to them. But they are invariably seen as competing with men, in Phase II. Phase II work is hard to accomplish, so I do not want to knock it: it does aim for the creation of equal opportunity in some sense. I just want to ask whose versions of what is desirable hang over our sense of opportunity? Who has defined good opportunities? White male definitions of opportunity govern most policy at present. If we get beyond exclusive definitions of what's desirable to wider definitions, if we validate all the diverse forms that human life has taken, we will see that those in power are not the best models for us. It is simply not desirable to make girl students into what boy students have been, but neither do we want to send the girls back into training to be the servants of boys. Rather, we need to change the males through an expanded curriculum to fill out the parts of their personalities which correspond better with what has been previously been educated too exclusively into the girls. The men will end up more complete and therefore less dangerous human beings than our present policy makers are. And the students who are female will end up more steady and centered than our students now are, and therefore more obviously valuable and valued than they are at present.

Academic situations in which the student identifies with his or her whole personality or focuses on the self in lateral relation to others are rare. Teaching situations in which the student becomes a resource and the teacher more of a learner than a gatekeeper are also rare. Curricula which put women even momentarily at the center are rarer still. Sharing and diversifying cultural power require more nerve, imagination, and support than most teachers have. But it is wonderful work, and it is right in line with our avowed aim of educating students for humane, informed life in a democracy. Figuring out how to create inclusive curricula and pedagogy will take us decades. But without this work, education contributes to our most serious personal, cultural, and global problems.

To return to President Reagan's phrases "a nation at risk," "excellence," and "the need to keep the curriculum out of the hands of narrow interest groups," you can see that I would put an entirely different context around each of these useful ideas. We are indeed a nation at risk, because the national definitions of excellence are tangled up in ideas of mastery and competition. Men in power have confused living with making war, achievement with domination of the many by the few. The confusion of quality with assertiveness puts all peoples at risk. I would agree that we need excellence in education. We were just beginning to imagine it, with a curriculum which got beyond the winning/losing view of human life, and the yes/no, right/wrong version of knowing in general. Just as we began to get the curriculum out of the hands of the narrow interest group which has always controlled it in this country, William Bennett gave us a prescription to restore it to the hands of the few. His prescription comes from fear on the part of his white middle-class male minority group as it realizes that it cannot, without force, remain the dominant group in this country or in the world. William Bennett's report for the National Endowment for the Humanities, "To Reclaim a Legacy," displays such force. In trying to insure that one group will keep speaking for all, Bennett writes of reclaiming his legacy, but he disparages my legacy. He shoulders twenty years of women's scholarship and minority studies out of the way, in order to put his kind of person in center stage again to exemplify both the humanities and our notions of humanity.

Our future now lies in disentangling education from that kind of male and white need to prevail. We cannot let education be made into a branch of the Defense Department, national, cultural, or personal. This conference, thanks to Louis Knight's programming, is hospitable to the alternative voices which federal programs are attempting to silence, muffle, or coopt. This conference allows us to envision education which meets students' real needs and speaks broadly to all of their existing worth and their potential power. Independent school teachers are well placed to use their actual power to share power, and their privilege to share privilege: this conference, especially in its emphasis on Gender Issues in the Schools, helps to point the way.